



Submitted photo

Children from the Kulshan Creek neighborhood in Mount Vernon pose by the mural they painted after its installation at the neighborhood station on Dec. 4. That day 24 students from the Kulshan Creek program watched a slide show of pictures from field trips taken through the program. Parents brought chicken, rice, shredded pork, tortillas and desserts for a potluck lunch. Mount Vernon resident Ian Haynes constructed a wooden frame around the mural made from reclaimed old-growth Douglas Fir lumber, which illustrated the reduce, reuse, recycle conservation message the students learned on their trips.

Forest service busy with youth, eagles

It's winter and a time outdoor activities tend to decline. Not so for the U.S. Forest Service.

Staff from the Forest Service, North Cascades Institute and the Mount Vernon Police Department hosted a dedication party Saturday, Dec. 4, for neighborhood youth at the police department's Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station in Mount Vernon.

Renee Bodine with the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Public Affairs office said earlier this fall Kulshan Creek Neighborhood youth created a mural that represents their experiences in the outdoors and how it relates to their community. About 30 of the youngsters celebrated their creation while they enjoyed an afternoon

potluck and slideshows from trips they took this year.

Bodine said forest service staff have also spent some time upgrading the agency's website. The new look was announced in early December. Go to www.fs.usda.gov (find Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest) to see the additional and revised features. Many forest service members are also involved in the annual Eagle Watchers Program, helping visitors view and learn about the majestic birds.

One of the largest wintering populations of bald eagles in the lower 48 states migrate through the Skagit River. Three viewing stations with off-highway parking along North Cascades Highway 20

provide spotting scopes and binoculars to help the public see the birds up close.

Volunteers will staff stations from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 18 through Jan. 30, except Christmas day, at Howard Miller Steelhead Park, 52809 Rockport Park Road, Rockport, Sutter Creek Rest area (milepost 100) and the Marblemount Fish Hatchery. Look for the yellow signs, or call 360-856-5700 for more information.

The Skagit River Bald Eagle Interpretive Center offers speakers at 11 a.m. Saturdays and free interpretive walks at 1 p.m. Sundays at Howard Miller Steelhead Park. The presentations and walks are free, but donations are appreciated. 360-853-7626 www.skagiteagle.org.